



Who we are as an organization – Mille Lacs SWCD is applying a civic governance approach to SWCD actions and activities. The work of the SWCD and the outcomes of its activities will produce a base of active citizens with common interest in sustainable soil & water conservation. All stakeholders are committed to organize, educate, and apply policy according to principles and standards instituted in democracy.

Frequently Used Acronyms:

(AgBMP) Agricultural BMP Loan Programs

(SCS) State Cost Share

(BWSR) Board of Water & Soil Resources

(CLWMP) County Local Water Mgmt Plan

(SWCD) Soil & Water Conservation District

(MASWCD) MN Assn. of Soil & Water Cons. Districts

(MLLWMG) Mille Lacs Lake Watershed Mgmt Group

(NRBG) Natural Resources Block Grant

(PFM) Private Forest Management

(CAI) County Agricultural Inspector

(NRCS) Natural Resources Conservation Service

(WCA) Wetland Conservation Act

(SRWMB) Snake River Watershed Mgmt Board

(CWF) Clean Water Fund

(TSA 3) Technical Service Area 3

(MAWQCP) MN Ag. Water Quality Certification Program

(WPLMN) Watershed Pollutant Load Monitoring Network

(1W1P) One Watershed, One Plan

(PTM) Priority Target Measure

(JAA) Job Approval Authority

Mille Lacs SWCD Board Meeting – MINUTES
Wednesday, November 10, 2021

Mille Lacs County Historic Courthouse, Conference Room D with remote option for the public.

Members Present:

Chair, Jake Janski, District 3

Vice Chair, Kurt Beckstrom, District 2

Treasurer, Robert Hoefert, District 5

Secretary, Andre LaSalle, District 4

Member, Dan Campbell, District 1

Staff Present:

District Administrator, Susan Shaw

Milaca High School Intern, Nicole Nelson

Visitors:

Commissioner Liaison, Genny Reynolds

NRCS, Barb Zeroth - remote

Members Absent: none

Call To Order & Pledge of Allegiance – Chair Janski called the meeting to order at 6:03 PM

1. Conflict of Interest Declaration – Supervisors were requested to identify any real or perceived conflicts of interest they may have regarding meeting business. The conflict-of-interest declaration form was provided to each for signature.

2. Approval of Agenda – (additions and deletions of new business or committee reports)

- additions - 9.i Miss-st cloud PC meeting, 7.d.ii Stantec/Wenck – (March-October) \$18,325.00
- deletions - _____

Motion by Hoefert to approve the agenda as amended. Second by Campbell. Affirmative: Beckstrom, Hoefert, LaSalle, Campbell. Opposed: none. **The motion carried.**

3. Open Public Forum - Board policy limits public forum time for board meeting topics not scheduled within the agenda to 10 minutes, but allows time extension by vote.

Barb Zeroth reported the EQIP application deadline is Nov 19. RCPP deadline will be Dec 17. CSP renewals due Nov 5. Unfunded canceled contracts will need to report 2 years to apply again.

4. Consent Agenda

- Approve October Regular Meeting Minutes
- Approve Monthly Disbursements - Electronic transfer's #E21-205- E21-222 and checks written #7793-7800, totaling \$27,439.71.
- Information Only: Partner Reports, Project Summaries, News Releases
- Administrators leave request: Nov 18-24 and roughly 1 day/week through December

Motion by Beckstrom to approve the consent agenda as presented. Second by LaSalle. Affirmative: Beckstrom, Hoefert, LaSalle, Campbell. Opposed: none. **The motion carried.**

5. Staff Reports/Presentations

- a. SWCD staff chat – Q&A: Nicole Nelson – Milaca High School Intern shared how the internship provides her college credit and what projects she is working on with the SWCD. She is assisting with the well location project for the geologic atlas and learning ArcGIS on the job. She is interested in learning about the type of conversations the SWCD has with landowners.

6. Financials

- a. 2020 Financial Audit overview – remote presentation provided by Peterson Company Ltd.
- b. Reconciliation of Bank Statements (Finance Committee Member) – LaSalle reconciled the October bank statements with the QuickBooks accounting system.
- c. Financial & Budget updates
Audit requirements – At the October board meeting supervisors asked if the annual SWCD financial audit was required. Shaw contacted BWSR for a detailed answer. In short, the state statute and BWSR requires SWCDs to do this kind of audit. Currently, BWSR and the Office of the State Auditor (OSA) require a less intense type annual audit as a condition of receiving state funds.

The district can request an auditing firm to conduct a more rigorous audit, but that would increase the cost of the audit. The district could also request a forensic audit, which checks for potential fraud, but this type of audit could cost as much as \$8,000-10,000. Entities which receive levy funds do need this higher-level audit and thus have a substantially higher annual audit cost.

SWCDs could do this audit in house but it would require a significant investment of resources to bring someone up to speed to provide the kind of information required for this level of audit. Therefore, having an external entity do the audit is likely more efficient for the district and a better use of time and financial resources.

The basic annual audit that SWCDs are required to have also provides an external view of the financial operation of the district. While it is not a forensic level audit, if there was gross fraud within the district financial operations, a good auditor would likely ask questions that might point to the need for a more rigorous analysis.

Financial assistance/hiring – Shaw has inquired if a local accounting firm would be available to assist with year-end accounting and restructuring the Quickbooks chart of accounts to an unearned revenue format as suggested by BWSR. It is unlikely that the SWCD would be able to hire and train an employee to fill this role before year end.

- d. SRW 1W1P Planning Grant P20-9953 fiscal expenditures to be reimbursed:
 - i. **Motion by Beckstrom to approve payment to Kanabec SWCD in the amount of \$3,405.46 for 3rd quarter expenses under the SRW 1w1p grant P20-9953.** Second by Hoefert Affirmative: Beckstrom, Hoefert, LaSalle, Campbell. Opposed: none. **The motion carried.**
 - ii. **Motion by Beckstrom to approve payment to Stantec/Wenck in the amount of \$18,325.00 for March-October 2021 expenses under the SRW 1w1p grant P20-9953.** Second by Hoefert Affirmative: Beckstrom, Hoefert, LaSalle, Campbell. Opposed: none. **The motion carried.**

7. District Policy, Planning, Activities, Projects, Grants

- a. Rental Equipment – repair estimates
Beckstrom reported that the Truax has a lot of wear on the machine and it needs repairs and maintenance before next season. The last renter was unable to use the machine effectively. Beckstrom received a price quote from Truax Company Inc in the amount of \$1,620.00 for parts and proposes work be done on the machine in March or April before the next planting season. This appears to be normal

wear and tear for the acreage planted by the Truax. These repairs are probably 1.5 yrs overdue for the acreage planted if we are projecting costs. The Tye also needs repairs approximately \$500.

Motion by Hoefert to approve purchase of parts for both seeders. Second by LaSalle. Affirmative: Beckstrom, Hoefert, LaSalle, Campbell. Opposed: none. **The motion carried.**

- b. Area3/MASWCD Business
 - i. MASWCD convention registration
Janski, Beckstrom, Campbell and Shaw plan to attend the convention.
- c. MN Dept Ag Noxious Weed Grant application – Staff will be submitting a grant for control work planned by MLC public works. City of Isle will be submitting a grant for planned spotted knapweed control.
- d. Comprehensive Watershed Planning (1W1P) updates
 - i. Rum River – 1W1P Policy Cmte RUM River – a pre-public hearing review of the plan will be hosted by staff.
 - ii. Snake River – Management Board/CAC & 1W1P Policy Cmte SNAKE River
Beckstrom reported a sub-committee has been formed to review the organizational structure and bylaws. The sub-committee is determining how to adapt the current joint powers structure requiring county voting member to pay dues, to a format that incorporates SWCD voting members without going against the charter of the administrative law judge.
 - iii. Mississippi St. Cloud / Sartell – An early meeting of the Policy Committee will be convened. Campbell plans to attend on behalf of the SWCD.

8. Informational Updates

- a. Water Management/Workgroups
 - i. Technical Service Area 3 (Hoefert/LaSalle) - none
 - ii. Mille Lacs Lake Watershed Management Group (Janski/LaSalle) – The group met Oct 18 to review input from the Healthy Lake Healthy Land event and discussed ways to market the Compass citizen recognition program. The group will review the annual work plan in December. Barb Eller applied and was awarded a \$1,500 grant to put on a stewardship picnic in 2022. Janski is advocating that the group change the dynamic of desiring to delegate the work of the MLLWMG to SWCD staff.
 - iii. Forestry Association (LaSalle/Janski) - none
 - iv. Local Water Management Plan Advisory Committee (LaSalle/Janski) - none

9. Approved SWCD Meetings & Events - Motion by LaSalle to approve supervisor attendance/reimbursement for the following meetings. Second by Hoefert. Affirmative: Beckstrom, Hoefert, LaSalle, Campbell. Opposed: none. **The motion carried.**

- a. 1W1P Rum River Policy Committee (Janski/Beckstrom) no Nov meeting
- b. Snake River Watershed CAC & Board Meeting (Beckstrom/Hoefert) Nov 22 @ 9:00, Hybrid?
1W1P Snake River Policy Committee @ 10:30, Hybrid?
1W1P Snake River TAC (Beckstrom as PC liaison) Nov 30 @ 1:30, Hybrid?
- c. TSA Area 3 (Hoefert/LaSalle) Dec 22 @ 10:00, Hybrid
- d. Mille Lacs Lake Watershed Mgmt. Group (Janski/LaSalle) no Nov meeting
- e. SWCD Forestry Association (LaSalle/Janski) Nov 18 @ 10:00, Hybrid?
- f. Local Water Management Plan Advisory Committee (LaSalle/Janski) TBD
- g. MASWCD convention (Kurt, Jake, Dan Susan/staff) Dec 12-14, Bloomington
- h. Internal Operational Committee Meetings
 - i. Finance (Hoefert/LaSalle) TBD
 - 1. Statement reconciliation w/Quickbooks (LaSalle) monthly
 - ii. Personnel (Janski/LaSalle) –Joint meeting to discuss hiring and employee reviews Dec 3, TBD
 - iii. Conservation (Beckstrom/Campbell)
 - iv. Public Outreach (Beckstrom/Campbell)
 - v. One on One Meetings with Administrator please schedule monthly as needed
- i. Mississippi-St. Cloud Watershed Policy Committee (Campbell) Nov 17 @ 12:30-2:00 PM, Location TBD

j. Interseeder rentals – six (6) rentals performed by Beckstrom from Sept 20-Nov 2nd

10. Supervisor Updates – Beckstrom was part of the MASWCD finance committee and reported there will be a dues increase of \$1,100 for 2022. National level operations committee will review and score grants are available for special projects. Coastal committee (national) discussing offloading of ballast and invasive species.

Jake attended the MASWCD meeting virtually.

11. Evaluate the Meeting

12. Next Regular Meeting – December 8, 6PM, Historic Courthouse, conference room D. A remote option will continue to be offered for presenters and the public. Board members will meet in person.

13. Adjourn – Chair Janski adjourned the meeting at 7:36 PM



~~Agnes Johnson~~, Mille Lacs SWCD Secretary
Dan Campbell

1/1/22
Date

Our specific purpose or vision is to organize more sustainable partnership between government and community, by developing and supporting an active role for all citizens in managing soil & water resources, that will ensure soil and water resources can meet the needs and the common good of all citizens.